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ABSTRACT

In an effort to research and document the history and contributions of African Americans in Osceola County, Florida, Valencia Community College implemented the African American History Project. The Project is a dual enrollment course allowing high school students to receive college and high school credits simultaneously. the approach of the project is multidisciplinary, incorporating faculty from humanities, speech, English, computer science, law, and graphic arts. The course begins with the history of African Americans in the United States, then narrows to explore African American contributions in Florida and Osceola County. In the course, students are exposed to the art, poetry, and films of classic and contemporary African Americans, and receive instruction in oral history interviewing, photography, formal research writing, research techniques, word processing, and project planning. The project attempts to demonstrate what can be accomplished through effective articulation of secondary and postsecondary education, exposes individuals to a multicultural perspective, and promotes cross-disciplinary awareness. Twenty-four students participated in the first semester of the course, but due to problems with course scheduling and project coordination, only three received college credit. Suggestions for planning similar programs are included. Appendixes include a concept paper, instructional schedule, course outline, list of activities, and syllabus for the course; a description of the first oral history interviewing project; and ideas for presentation planning. (TGI)

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Crossing Frontiers: A Course that Bridges Racial and Institutional Divides

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Paper presented at the Annual International Conference of the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development on Teaching Excellence and Conference of Administrators (17th, Austin, TX, May 21-24, 1995)

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Abstract

African-American history has become an accepted part of the curriculum at many colleges; however, traditional approaches to history generally neglected the contributions of African-Americans to this country. This is also true in Central Florida. Osceola County, Florida, has a rich history that has been well documented from an almost exclusively white perspective. Our purpose is to bring the rich history of African-Americans to the forefront.

To bring the contributions and history of African-Americans to light, Valencia Community College spearheaded an Osceola County African-American History Project, and is offering it as a dual enrollment course that allows high school students to receive college and high school credits simultaneously. The program is multidisciplinary incorporating faculty from humanities, speech, English, computer science, law, and graphic arts.

The course begins with the history of African-Americans in the United States and then narrows to Florida's specific history. Finally, it focuses on Osceola County. In addition to history, students are exposed to the art, poetry and films of classic and contemporary African-Americans. Instruction in oral history interviewing, photography, formal research writing, research

techniques, word processing, and project planning are included.

The purpose of the project is to research and document the history and contributions of African-Americans in Osceola County, Florida. Further, it demonstrates what can be accomplished through effective articulation, it exposes individuals to a multicultural perspective, and it promotes cross-disciplinary awareness.

Suggestions for program improvements are made. Syllabi, support materials and other materials included in the appendices.

Crossing Frontiers: A Course that Bridges Racial and Institutional Divides

A local community member who is very active in minority affairs proposed a project between the local community college and high school. The purpose of the project was to document the contributions of African-Americans in the local community. A concept paper was submitted to both the college and district school board (Appendix A), who came together to plan a dual enrollment program which would be taught at the high school and would use college faculty as guest lecturers. A steering committee was formed consisting of college, high school and school board officials to define the scope of the project, set goals, and identify impediments to the successful completion of the project.

The committee limited the scope of the project to the years 1900 to the present, but left the nature of the project to the discretion of the teacher and consulting college faculty. The committee also identified several areas that would need to be addressed early to ensure the success of the project. One of these was the security of any artifacts or exhibits borrowed from the community at large. The development of job descriptions for the personnel involved would allow for clear delineation of duties, and a smoother progression of the program. Three, the development of an advisory board composed of community members was deemed essential to the projects success. A fourth concern was what

research resources would be available to the students, and the number of credit hours to be awarded. Five, the identification of a project coordinator who would supervise curriculum development and instruction Some of these issues were quickly resolved; some were still unresolved at the end of the project.

During the initial planning sessions, the steering committee discussed the composition of the community advisory board. It was felt that the group should include representation from all socioeconomic levels in order to open doorways to community members and establish a trusting atmosphere that would aid students in getting information. Responsibilities for the advisory board were generated, including: overseeing continuation of the project; helping to keep the project community focused; overseeing the documentation and presentation of the project; serving liaisons between the community and those involved in the project; and providing direction for the project when needed. Several mailings were made to prominent African American community members, but a very limited response was received. Although the community advisory board was considered an essential part of the project and seen as necessary for its success, the steering committee was never able to pull together sufficient members of the African American community to form a viable advisory board.

Another problem which faced the project from the beginning was that the course was added to the high school's schedule after registration took place. As students had not factored the course into their schedules, it would require rewriting students schedules for the Fall. Some students could not be

reschedule because alternate sections had already filled to capacity, and rescheduling might cause difficulties meeting graduation requirements. This resulted in students being placed into the project bases on which students schedules could be most easily changed, not on student interest. Along these same lines, high school officials interpreted African American to mean black students. Thus, any student with black skin was considered a candidate for the program. The final composition of the class, although mainly African American descent, included Caribbean Africans and South American Africans who had no interest what so ever in African American history. Further, dual enrollment classes have specific grade point averages required. Because of the methods of selection detailed above only three of the twenty-four students participating would receive college credit for the course.

Another difficulty with planning the program was that many of the high school instructors had already made plans for the summer and would not be able to participate in the curriculum development and design portion of the class. In essence, the course would be designed and the content decided by people who would not be directly teaching the course. No one involved in the project was please with this idea, but alternatives were difficult to generate.

Discussion was held about the credit assigned to the course, both for both the college and high school. The course would run one year or two semesters, which would equal six hours of college dual enrollment credit. This would be three hours of HUM2930 (Selected Topics in Humanities) and

AFA2000 (Introduction to the African American Experience). This way the course could include, in addition to history, sociology, humanities, or anthropology. There would also be one hour high school credit per semester (two hours for the year), that would count toward English requirements for high school graduation.

The course was scheduled to meet for two hours a day, five days a week. Faculty's schedules were arranged such that they would be able to participate on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

A computer literacy component in the course was developed and supervised by college computer science faculty. There were adequate labs in the high school setting to do this, and they were equipped with Microsoft Works.

At a latter meeting, a high school teacher was selected as coordinator for the project. at this same meeting, two additional issues were raised. As these were high school students and under eighteen, parental permission would need to be secured for field trips. Second was the source for project funding. Both the college and high school agreed to jointly fund the project. Unfortunately, a budget detailing specific fiscal responsibility was not developed, and the college the majority of costs.

The faculty selected to work with the project cut across many disciplines, including humanities, English, computer science, graphic arts, speech, and law. Their first action was to develop a tentative schedule for the presentation of topics (Appendix B), which was then turned in to a course outline (Appendix C). This outline was eventually became part of syllabus for the first semester.

Further meetings resulted in a list of activities that could be undertaken by the students, or could provide additional resources for information gathering. As Osceola county was known for its cattle industry, one suggestion involved researching the office of Marks and Brands for early African-American cattle ranchers. A field trip to the Historical Society's circa 1900 house was suggested. A review of the county Library's holdings revealed seven previous books on county history. One of these is the county historical society's Osceola Centennial Book which documents the 100 years since the founding of the county. There were many photographs of African Americans with their names listed and articles about some prominent community members. It was suggested that each student could choose a historical picture to research and report on as their own personal project.

A field trip to the former location of the Kissimmee Black High School was suggested. One of the historical books had a picture of the first graduating class. Students could research the names of the people in the photo and begin by sending them a letter telling them about the project and is purpose. Several other suggested projects are detailed in Appendix D.

Faculty members developed the syllabus for the first session of the course which is provided in Appendix E. The first semester would be a Selected Topics in Humanities course. Humanities was chosen to allow for a broadly based approach to the content material. The goal was to integrate with the history of African Americans, the art, literature, and the culture. It was thought

that jumping into the local history may not provide a solid background in African American history. The course was designed to begin with the history of African Americans' in the United States. The focus would then narrow to the history, humanities and contributions of African Americans' in Florida. The third part of the course would again narrow the focus of the student's studies to central Florida and more specifically to Osceola county.

In keeping with this organization of the course, students were provided several texts that paralleled the geographic region being covered in class. The initial text was African Americans in America. This broad based text covers the history of African Americans in general. The second text used was African Americans in Florida, a recently published text book (Jones, M. D. & McCarthy, K. M., 1993). This book is written in the form of short historical essays about important events or prominent people in the history of Florida. To provide a literature resource for the students an order was placed for African American Literature. Unfortunately, the text was out of stock and six months later the publisher still could not provide a single copy. Instead, art, literature, and humanities were covered with teacher generated materials, rather than with a text book. The Color Purple was selected by the teacher as a full length book for the students to read. After completing the reading, the students watched the movie version in class. Another timely publication adopted and provided for the students was the Winter 1994/1995 issue of the Florida Humanities Council Forum which featured a special on the civil rights era in Florida from 1954 to

1965.

As he semester began some coordination problems cropped up. A liaison between the college faculty and high school teacher was appointed. This person was responsible for scheduling field trips, securing purchase orders for texts and materials, and scheduling faculty lectures. As a result of some miscommunication the primary teacher thought the liaison had taken over the coordination of the program. This resulted in some initial confusion about who was responsible for decision making and course planning, but the situation was corrected.

During the first semester, college faculty came to the high school and instructed the students in research techniques, presentation planning, legal document research, and audio recording skills. A particular emphasis was given to developing oral history interviewing skills (Appendix F).

The second semester saw an increase in the activity toward the oral history interviews. A new syllabus was developed and the course number was changed to AFA2000 An Introduction to the African American Experience. The syllabus is provided in Appendix G. Students had two major tasks to complete this semester. First, they had to perform the actual interviews with community volunteers (Appendix H). Second, they had to decide how each interviewing team would present the information to the community. Some of the possible presentation styles are listed in Appendix I.

Students performed interviews with several community figures and

transcripts of the interviews were generated, while continuing their studies of local history. The transcripts were reviewed by faculty and were submitted to the University of Florida's history project who asked the students to submit any other information they gathered.

As the project neared completion, several problem areas were evident. Most of these could have been resolved earlier, some could have been prevented before the project began, and a few were still unresolved at the end of the project. These problems and some suggestions for preventing or resolving them follow. One, develop a budget that clearly defines the fiscal responsibilities of each institution. It is essential that the program knows how much it has to put toward the project, and can allocate that money early in the planning period. Two, one person at the program level needs decision making authority. Three, carefully screen students and the primary teacher for a desire to do this type of project. Many of the students did not fully realize the type of commitment required for a course of this nature. Four, make a realistic expectation for what you can accomplish with the level of the students and the time allotted. It was greatly overestimated what could be accomplished in the course of one year, and while the students quite admirably rose the challenge, more was left undone of our original goals than were completed. Five, get the community advisory board involved early. Sending letters to the community proved useless. Making contacts for this type of project requires going to the community, shaking hands and making personal contacts. Six, do not rush the planning stage. The people

involved were very excited about the project and assumed that others would react similarly. In their enthusiasm, the project began without any clear decisions about who would do what by when. This resulted in much frustration with the program and provided an impediment to completing its goals. Last, even though the project is exciting and faculty and students are ready to begin, the high school teacher will need continual support and contact from the coordinator, advisory board, and school administrators.

APPENDIX A

CONCEPT PAPER

HISTORICAL RESEARCH OF AFRICAN-AMERICANS IN OSCEOLA COUNTY, FLORIDA

OVERVIEW:

Osceola County is one of the fastest growing counties in the state of Florida, if not in the United States. It is located twenty (20) miles south of Orlando and approximately 15 minutes away from the excitement of Disney World. Thousands of tourists pass through the corridors of the county with little to no knowledge of the richness in history and heritage that are a part of Osceola County. Many of the residents of this county are also ignorant of the historical tradition that helped to mold this area. For the few that are aware of this tradition, i.e., from the first pioneer settlers to Disney's coming into Central Florida, it has been purely from a white perspective.

African-Americans in Osceola County have a rich history which needs to be brought out to the forefront. It is now fashionable and even politically correct to openly talk about multiculturism and cultural diversity. Now is also the time to put the history of African-Americans in this county in writing. If you will, African-American contributions to the development of Osceola County, as well as Central Florida must be "infused" in the already documented history of this region.

When we look at the African-American communities in Osceola County today, there are children in those communities calling for direction and a sense of belonging. We also have those communities that are calling out for direction. We find ourselves at the point of following the old saying that says, "to know where you are going you must know where you have been Black youth everywhere, but in particular, Osceola County do not know where they are going, because they do not have a sense of where they come from. The documented history of their people in this area may give them that~ sense of belonging to something that is rich and valuable.

The possession of history is an important tool in increasing self-esteem and self worth. In the case of African-American children this is a most important issue. From a wider perspective, the research, documentation, and presentation of African-American history in this area will not only benefit the African-American communities, but it stands to enrich the fiber of all of Osceola County. As Osceola County continues to grow and change, various ethnic groups and

cultures will be bringing their history with them. This history will be the matter that strengthens the diversity of the community.

SCOPE:

The proposal in question is to develop a project that will research and document the history and contributions of African- Americans in Osceola County, Florida. The presentation of such a project will be to chronologically catalog the events and personalities in the African-American communities that helped to shape the history and development of those communities in Osceola County.

METHOD/MECHANICS:

In order to properly carry out the tasks of research and documentation, we propose using college level students (those pursuing a course of study in the social sciences) and upper level high school students. The student researchers will receive credit for their work and participation in the project. We foresee this as a two-term program. In other words, the students will learn the theories of social research in their first semester and thereafter go into the "field" in the second term to do the actual research and cataloging of information. This project may function best as a seminar or supervised independent study. The supervision and mentoring will be conducted by a teacher from Valencia Community College. The teacher will oversee the research and work done by the students.

Another key player in this project will be a community liaison. This person will serve as the contact between the researchers and the personalities within the various communities to be contacted for information, interviews, and artifacts.

The actual data collection will be done through literature searches and interviewing. As much as possible, an attempt will be made to get the information from primary sources. If this is not possible we will have to settle for secondary sources. All information will have to be qualified for the credibility of the study.

TIME FRAMES:

Given the possible magnitude of the study and the consumption of time in getting the project completed, it may take more than two semesters. Therefore, as students come and students go, we must insure some measure of continuity and consistency in the project. Another school of thought may be to define the parameters of the historical study, i.e., possibly 1930's to the present. This is a matter that needs to be looked at and taken into consideration.

APPENDIX B

Osceola County African-American History Project

Proposed Instructional Schedule

Weeks 1 - 3:

Introduction of team members and project; discussion of the history of the period, 1900 to present, and discussion of a conceptual framework (Mulholland); literature of the period and about the area (Gooden, Tuthill)

Weeks 4-10:

Research strategies (Magruder, Tuthill); oral histories and interview techniques (Colburn, Mulholland) ; computer literacy (Husbands); formal research writing (Gooden, Tuthill)

Weeks 11-18:

Field trip to Osceola County Historical Society; mini research projects (test runs) ; computer input (Husbands)

The schedule is tentative, and the faculty realize that adjustments will have to be made as we work through the course.

APPENDIX C

Course Outline

I. Orientation

This portion of the course will cover the fundamentals of black history in the United States.

II. Introduction to Research Tools

A. Oral History Interviewing - Students will be taught techniques for interviewing. They will begin interviewing parents and friends of the family to gain experience, and then move to persons in the community. (Mulholland)

B. Research Strategies - Students will learn possible locations for collecting research information. Libraries, museums, art and photo collections, and the County Courthouse will be discussed. (Tuthill, Williamson, Magruder)

C. Computer Skills - Students will learn how the computer may be utilized to aide them in the collection and categorization of information, including word processors and databases. (Husbands)

D. Project Conceptualization - Students will be exposed to possible methods for presenting the information they have collected. Poster presentations, plays, speeches, books, etc. will be explored along with other ideas generated by the students. (Colburn; Williamson)

E. Formal Research Writing - Students will learn the basics of style and presentation for information they have collected. (Tuthill)

III. Field Trips

Running concurrently with other phases of the project. Possible trips include the Valencia libraries, UCF library, etc.

APPENDIX D

Activities for the African American History Project

Perhaps family members for original Osceola families could begin coming to tell the class about the history of the county. Several students indicated their families have lived in this county for several generations.

Ms. Spence at the Historical Society on Bass Road told Don Tuthill she would be glad to talk to the students about the county. They would also be able to see a circa 1900 house, and see how people lived at the turn of the century. I imagine we can get a student rate for admission. Bass Road facility 396-8644

Don Tuthill researched seven books located at the Osceola Public Library on the history of the county. The county completed a historical project culminating in the Osceola Centennial Book which documents the 100 years since the founding of the county. There were many photographs of African Americans with their names listed and articles about some prominent community members.

One photograph shows the first graduating class of Kissimmee High School in 1945 without names. Perhaps the students could research the names of the people in the photo and begin by sending them a letter telling them about the project and is purpose.

Don Tuthill suggested that students go to the public library and go through the books on Osceola county history until they come to the first reference they find to an African American. The name or picture they found would then become the students personal project to research. In this way, each student may be able to have an individual historical figure to research and report on.

Showing some films on African American history in general to provide background. David Bogert thought PBS had a two hour special on Black Cowboys in America. Perhaps we could secure a copy to show to the class over the course of a couple of days. Other movies may be relevant to an understanding of the overall history of African Americans and their contributions to the United States.

David Bogert contacted the Florida Cattleman's Association in Kissimmee who indicated they have some biographical on ranchers and the history of cattlemen in the state. I was told that Tammy would be the person to talk to about this information. 846-6221.

David Bogert contacted the Department of Marks and Brands. This is one of the oldest official state departments and began as the Livestock Sanitary Board and consisted of the Governor and two cabinet members. Mike Enoff offered us any assistance he could give and offered to help us dig through the original records of ranchers and brands. He extended his invitation to visit him in Tallahassee. He also offered to research brands or other information by Fax. Phone 904-922-0187. Fax 904-487-3641. He stated that they can research brands before 1945 by the Name of the owner or registration number and after 1945 by name of owner, registration number, or the brand itself. He stated they have successfully tracked brands and owners back to 1837. They can also estimated herd sizes through records of the Cow dipping program.

Ron Colburn indicated he will try to secure sufficient copies of the Catherine Beauchamp book for the program.

David Bogert spoke with Lida Partin who indicated that many of the old families had African American employees who worked for them for 20, 30 or even 40 years, and were trusted and valued employees. She indicated that her own family and others would probably be willing to get involved, by providing names or histories.

We are in the process of scheduling the first meeting of the Advisory board for some time in the next couple of weeks.

APPENDIX E

HUM 2930 - SELECTED TOPICS IN HUMANITIES
THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IN OSCEOLA COUNTY

Fannetta Gooden
Valencia Community College, Osceola High School
Session 1, 1994-95

COURSE INFORMATION

HUM 2930 - Selected Topics in Humanities is a 3 credit hour course that provides an introduction to the diversity of the twentieth century African-American experience in Osceola County. HUM 2930 will present information on the history, culture, and literature of the African-American community. It will also stress the research skills that will be needed to explore the heritage of Osceola County's African-American community. Students will be expected to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the products of their research in written, oral, and audiovisual work.

This course will thus wholly or partially reinforce the following CLAST competencies and Valencia graduate competencies:

Valencia Graduate Competencies:

* Think critically and make reasoned choices by acquiring, synthesizing, and evaluating knowledge.
* Read, listen, and write effectively
* Clarify personal strengths, values, and goals in relation to cultural values.
* Recognize the value of aesthetics

CLAST Competencies:

* Reading Skills
* Essay Skills
* English Language Skills

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Name: Fannetta Gooden
Office: Osceola High School
Telephone: 846 5407
Office Hours: Announced at beginning of Session 1.

EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

Students will be given handouts and research materials as the course progresses.

EVALUATION

Grades will be assigned on the basis of a student's mastery of the material and concepts covered in the course. This will be assessed as follows:

Tests: Tests and examinations are worth 50% of the final grade. There will be 4 non-cumulative tests worth a total of 40%. These tests will require students to respond to objective and essay questions. The final will be worth 10%. This will consist of two essay questions that ask students to discuss themes that run throughout the course.

Papers: Writing assignments are worth 20% of the final grade. Details on these papers will be forthcoming in the first week of the semester.

Research: You will be expected to conduct several research projects, both individually and in groups. These projects are worth 30% of the final grade.

The grading scale is: 93+ = A, 86-92% = B, 78-85% = C, 70-77% = D, 0-69% = F.

A student may withdraw at any time before 11/4/94 by filing a withdrawal form in the Admissions Office in Building I and receive a W for a grade. After this date, if a student withdraws or is withdrawn by the professor for excessive absence or other reasons, the professor will assign a withdrawal grade of WP (Withdrawn Passing) or WF (Withdrawn Failing), based upon the student's academic achievement in the class as of the last date of attendance. A W or WP will not be calculated in the grade point average; a WF will be calculated as an F in the grade point average. If a student fails to take the required final examination, the professor will assign a WF.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Attendance: Valencia's attendance policy is that a student will be present for all class meetings (p. 35 college catalog). Missed tests or missed assignments will be assigned zero credit.

Honesty: Students must do their own work; there are no exceptions. Students who cheat or plagiarize in any way risk dismissal from the class and expulsion from the college. Any assignment that is completed dishonestly will be given zero credit.

Conduct: There will be no eating and drinking in the classroom. Tardiness is unacceptable as is any kind of abusive or intolerant behavior. Much of your course work will take you out in the community. You will be expected to reflect credit on Osceola High School and Valencia Community College at all times.

The instructor is there to help you, not just to issue sanctions. Students are encouraged to contact the instructor periodically. This is especially important for the writing assignments. The instructor will review any rough drafts and make suggestions for improvements that might lead to a better grade. If a student has any disabilities or special circumstances that might affect his/her performance in the course, please tell the instructor.

DISCLAIMER

Course policies and procedures may be changed at the discretion of the instructor; students will be advised of any changes in writing.

SPECIAL RULES

All writing assignments are due during class on the day assigned. Papers handed in late will be penalized a letter grade for every working day they are late.

COURSE DESIGN

HUM 2930 is the first half of a one year project of discovery that will allow students to explore the history and culture of African-Americans in Osceola County. The course is supported by the instructor, Ms. Fannetta Gooden, a team of Valencia Community College faculty, and an Advisory Council drawn from the community.

The program of studies will be as follows:

INTRODUCTIONS:

Students will be introduced to all of the individuals involved in this project. Preliminary discussions on the scope and direction of the project will take place between the students, faculty, and advisors.

CREATING A FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING:

If students want to learn about a culture, they must know some of the milestones that culture has passed. Faculty will give a series of lectures on the most important historical developments in Osceola County and the U.S.A. from 1900 to the present. Students will also begin to explore some of the works of art and literature that were shaped by, and helped shape, those events.

DEVELOPING RESEARCH TOOLS:

Students will begin to learn how to explore the African- American experience in Osceola County. A multidisciplinary team of faculty will share the following skills from their own discipline areas.

* Oral History Interviewing
* Still and Video Photography
* Oral Presentation of Research
* Using Databases and Word Processing
* Searching for Documentary Evidence
* Citing Evidence in Research papers
* Designing Research Projects

BEGINNING IN RESEARCH:

Students will complete a series of small research projects that will field-test the skills they have learned in the classroom. These projects will be designed and conducted individually and collaboratively.

APPENDIX F

OSCEOLA COUNTY AFRICAN-AMERICAN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
FIRST ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWING PROJECT
SEPTEMBER 1994

Getting started on oral history requires technical and human-relations skills. Use this first assignment to familiarize yourself with the process of interviewing. Do not worry about getting a great deal of historically significant information at this stage. You should use this opportunity to familiarize yourself with your equipment and develop your questioning skills. It is one thing to mess up when your talking to your mother. It is another thing entirely to come away with a blank tape when you were the last person to talk with a ninety year-old woman before she died.

This assignment asks you to get your equipment together, choose a subject, and conduct a ten-minute interview. Finally, your instructors and peers will evaluate your efforts.

Using the Equipment:

You may either use a tape-recorder or video-recorder. Both types of equipment pose different challenges. Whatever equipment you decide to use, practice with it before you set up for an interview. Pretend to interview your partner and work out the best placement and settings for your equipment.

Tape-Recorder - The simplest machines have built-in microphones that pick up sounds from all directions. Ask your subject to say a few words to make sure that he/she is being picked up. Make sure that you have as quiet an environment as possible. Every passing car, tapping finger, or nervous cough will sound magnified.

If at all possible, do not use micro- recorders. They have poor recording and play-back capacities.

Do try and use a separate microphone. This will do a much better job of eliminating stray noise. Don't worry if you don't have this equipment yet - we'll get it in time for your first major interview.

Video-Recorder - Video cameras generally have good sound quality, and they provide an audio record of your subject. They may pose problems if your subject becomes very self-conscious. Make sure you ask permission before you

plan on filming your interview. It is generally a good idea to have the camera always on the subject. It takes a professional and several cameras to make an interview look smooth and natural if the final image cuts between the subject and the interviewer.

Professional oral historians tend not to use video tape. It doesn't last as long as audio tape when stored in an archive.

Expensive equipment is not the key to a good interview. You and your subject need to be comfortable and at ease. If you are nervously fiddling about with buttons and switches, you'll do nothing to put your subject at ease. Again, remember to practice.

Choosing a Subject:

You should start with someone reasonably familiar to you. This will help you to be less nervous, and it will also help you frame questions. A parent, grandparent, teacher, minister, or neighbor would all be good choices. Don't worry about choosing someone who has lived a long time or participated in some famous event. Oral history is mainly designed to recapture the experiences of everyday people living everyday lives.

Conducting Your Interview:

Oral history interviews are simple enough - you ask the questions and the subject provides the answers. The problem lies in the fact that, while you can control the questions, you often have no idea what kind of answers you'll get. Skilled interviewers deal with this by framing questions carefully.

You should always begin by asking a series of context questions. These provide you with some basic biographical data. Sample questions could include the following:

"Please state your full name."

"Are you better known by any nicknames?"

"Mr. _____ , please tell me where you were born."

"Mrs. _____, please tell me when you were born."

"When did you move to Osceola County?"

"What kind of school did you attend?"

These context questions are designed to get specific information. You will probably get fairly focused responses. After that, however, you have some decisions to make. There are two basic types of oral history interviews: Life Histories and Focus Histories. The first category is too broad for a short assignment. You should try and get some information that is focused on a few issues.

You may decide to adopt a "then and now" focus. In other words, ask your subject how school, family, or other important areas of life have changed in their lifetime. You could adopt a "then" focus. Don't worry about the present day, but instead explore the specifics of their past experience in a few designated areas. Your focus could also be on the genealogy of your own family. The important thing is to know what you want to get out of the interview.

Once you have that knowledge, you need a script of questions that will help you to get the responses you want. With some subjects, one question about days gone by will start a monologue that will last all of your allotted time. Other subjects will need prompting. Prepare a list of 15-20 questions that you can use to prod your subject. Often, you will need to know something about the subject to use these well. Examples could include the following:

"Well Uncle Henry, you have always told me that your school-days were a lot tougher. Tell me about them."

"When you came to Kissimmee, segregation was still in force. How did this affect entertainment' How was health care' How were your teachers... Did you feel abused... How much have things changed?

If you don't have a good script of prompt questions, you could be faced with long and embarrassing silences. Always prepare more than you think you'll need. If you have enough questions, you can deal with any kind of subject - good preparation puts you back in control.

Evaluating the Interview:

Choose 3-4 minutes of tape and play it for the class. Class members will critique your efforts. Learn from your successes and failures. Also, hand in a paper that contains the following information:

* What you were trying to find out in this interview.

* The context questions you used or planned to use.

* The prompt questions you used or planned to use.

APPENDIX G

AFA 2000 - INTRODUCTION TO THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Name: Fannetta Gooden
Office: Osceola High School
Telephone: 846-5407
931-3000, x-1206
Office Hours: Announced at beginning of Session 2.

COURSE INFORMATION

AFA 2000 - Introduction to the African-American Experience is a three credit hour course that provides an interdisciplinary examination to the African-American culture as an expression of its African heritage and as a response to economic, social, cultural, and political pressure in the New World.

AFA 2000 will present information on the history, culture, and literature of the Florida African-American community. It will also stress the research skills that will be needed to explore the heritage of Osceola County's African-American community. As the second half of the year long history project: THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IN OSCEOLA COUNTY, this semester will focus primarily on African-Americans in the state of Florida and local community. Students will be expected to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the products of their research in written, oral, and audio-visual work.

This course will thus wholly or partially reinforce the following CLAST competencies and Valencia graduate competencies:

Valencia Graduate Competencies:

* Think critically and make reasoned choices by acquiring, synthesizing, and evaluating knowledge.
* Read, listen, and write effectively
* Clarify personal strengths, values, and goals in relation to cultural values.
* Recognize the value of aesthetics

CLAST Competencies:

* Reading Skills
* Essay Skills
* English Language Skills

EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

Jones, M.D. & McCarthy, K.M. (1993). African Americans in Florida. Sarasota, FL: Pineapple Press, Inc.

Edmunds, R. (Ed.). (1994). The civil rights era 1954-1965. FHC Forum. XVIII(1).

Students will be given handouts and research materials as the course progresses.

EVALUATION

Grades will be assigned on the basis of a student's mastery of the material and concepts covered in the course. This will be assessed as follows:

Tests: Tests and examinations are worth 50% of the final grade. There will be 4 non-cumulative tests worth a total of 40%. These tests will require students to respond to objective and essay questions. The final will be worth 10%. This will consist of two essay questions that ask students to discuss themes that run throughout the course.

Papers: Writing assignments are worth 20% of the final grade. Details on these papers will be forthcoming in the first week of the semester.

Research: You will be expected to conduct several research projects, both individually and in groups. These projects are worth 30% of the final grade.

The grading scale is: 93+ = A, 86-92% = B, 78-85% = C, 70-77% = D, 0-69% = F.

A student may withdraw at any time before 3/24/95 by filing a withdrawal form in the Admissions Office in Building I and receive a W for a grade. After this date, if a student withdraws or is withdrawn by the professor for excessive absence or other reasons, the professor will assign a withdrawal grade of WP (Withdrawn Passing) or WF (Withdrawn Failing), based upon the student's academic achievement in the class as of the last date of attendance. A W or WP will not be calculated in the grade point average; a WF will be calculated as an F in the grade point average. If a student fails to take the required final examination, the professor will assign a WF.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Attendance: Valencia's attendance policy is that a student will be present for all class meetings (p. 35 college catalog). Missed tests or missed assignments will be assigned zero credit.

Honesty: Students must do their own work; there are no exceptions. Students who cheat or plagiarize in any way risk dismissal from the class and expulsion from the college. Any assignment that is completed dishonestly will be given zero credit.

Conduct: There will be no eating and drinking in the classroom. Tardiness is unacceptable as is any kind of abusive or intolerant behavior. Much of your course work will take you out in the community. You will be expected to reflect credit on Osceola High School and Valencia Community College at all times.

The instructor is there to help you, not just to issue sanctions. Students are encouraged to contact the instructor periodically. This is especially important for the writing assignments. The instructor will review any rough drafts and make suggestions for improvements that might lead to a better grade. If a student has any disabilities or special circumstances that might affect his/her performance in the course, please tell the instructor.

DISCLAIMER

Course policies and procedures may be changed at the discretion of the instructor; students will be advised of any changes in writing.

SPECIAL RULES

All writing assignments are due during class on the day assigned. Papers handed in late will be penalized a letter grade for every working day they are late.

COURSE DESIGN

AFA 2000 is the second half of a one year project of discovery that will allow students to explore the history and culture of African-Americans in Osceola County. The course is supported by the instructor, Ms. Fannetta Gooden, a team of Valencia Community College faculty, and an Advisory Council drawn from the community.

The program of studies will be as follows:

INTRODUCTIONS:

Students will be introduced to all of the individuals involved in this project. Preliminary discussions on the scope and direction of the project will take place between the students, faculty, and advisors.

CREATING A FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING:

If students want to learn about a culture, they must know some of the milestones that culture has passed. Faculty will give a series of lectures on the most important historical developments in Osceola County and the U.S.A. from 1900 to the present. Students will also begin to explore some of the works of art and literature that were shaped by, and helped shape, those events.

DEVELOPING RESEARCH TOOLS:

Students will begin to learn how to explore the African-American experience in Osceola County. A multidisciplinary team of faculty will share the following skills from their own discipline areas.

* Oral History Interviewing
* Still and Video Photography
* Oral Presentation of Research
* Using Databases and Word Processing
* Searching for Documentary Evidence
* Citing Evidence in Research papers
* Designing Research Projects

BEGINNING IN RESEARCH:

Students will complete a series of small research projects that will field-test the skills they have learned in the classroom. These projects will be designed and conducted individually and collaboratively.

APPENDIX H

AFRICAN AMERICAN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
PREFACE TO SECOND ASSIGNMENT

Your next task is to conduct a formal and focused interview. Please use the next couple of weeks to do the following:

- Decide on a focus topic that the whole class will use. You might decide, for example, to look at the impact of desegregation in the schools. You might also look at the place of the church in African American society

- Whatever you decide, it will be important to do some background research. You can look at old newspapers, invite guest speakers, or do some general historical research.

- Use collaborative learning to work up a long script of prompt questions. You won't all use all the questions, but you'll have them available.

- If possible, develop a list of possible subjects. The Advisory Committee will help on that.

Remember, we'll need to address all our equipment problems before we do this first "real" interview.

APPENDIX I

African-American History Project
Presentation Planning Ideas (presenting your historical findings)

1. Art work or poster presentation.
2. Drama reenactment
3. Newscast
4. Video presentation
5. Musical presentation (narration)
6. Dance presentation(narration)
7. Skits
8. Symposium, debate, or forum
9. Talk Show
10. Speech or paper presentation

REFERENCES

Jones, M. D. & McCarthy, K.M. (1993). African Americans in Florida. Sarasota, FL: Pineapple Press, Inc.

The Civil Rights Era 1954-1965. (1994/1995). XVIII(1).